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SUBJECT: DAILY SUMMARY OF JAPANESE PRESS 05/07/07

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#### ARTICLES:

(18) Poll: 270 candidates ready to run in this summer's Upper House election

TOKYO SHIMBUN (Top Play) (Full)  
May 4, 2007

The expectation is that unless the current regular Diet session is extended, the official campaign for the 21st House of Councillors election will begin on July 5 and the voting will take place on July 12. According to the survey by the Tokyo Shimbun as of May 3, 270 candidates are now ready to run, seeking the 121 seats up for grabs in the July Upper House election. The 121 include 47 prefecture-level-constituency seats and proportional representation seats. Both ruling and opposition parties will file their candidates in almost all constituencies. All political parties began getting ready to fight in the Upper House race soon after the April unified local elections ended, electing new municipal assembly members who will actively support the campaigning for the Upper House election.

The (121) seats not up for reelection include 58 held by the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), its coalition partner New Komeito, and minor groups, and 63 held by the opposition bloc. The highlight of the upcoming election is whether the ruling camp or the opposition will secure a majority in the Upper House. In order to get a majority, the ruling coalition needs to win at least 64 seats, while the opposition needs 59. The ruling and opposition parties will engage in fierce competition, setting low thresholds for victory.

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The Upper House race will be the first major national election for the Abe administration, which was inaugurated last September. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who has pushed ahead with constitutional and education reforms, as well as reform of the civil servant system in order to break away from the postwar regime, will receive the judgment of the people. The main opposition party, Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan), has positioned the election as a decisive battle for a change of government. Party head Ichiro Ozawa's political skills are being tested.

The LDP will field its own candidates in 46 prefectural constituencies, excluding Gifu. The party will sponsor one of the postal rebels as a candidate in the Gifu constituency. The largest opposition party is ready to endorse as its official candidates or sponsor candidates for 42 prefectures, excluding Ishikawa, Shimane, and Miyazaki. The party intends to wrap up the selection of candidates and coordination possibly before the end of May. Considering that 29 "single seats" up for grabs hold the key to victory in the election, the LDP aims to win 20 seats, while Minshuto wants to secure 15.

(19) Poll on Abe cabinet, political parties (Nihon Keizai)

NIHON KEIZAI (Page 2) (Full)  
April 30, 2007

#### Questions & Answers

(Figures shown in percentage. Parentheses denote findings from the last survey conducted in March.)

Q: Do you support the Abe cabinet?

Yes	53	(43)
No	37	(45)
Can't say (C/S) + don't know (D/K)	11	(12)

Q: Which political party do you support or like now?

Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)	43	(41)
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto)	21	(18)

New Komeito (NK)	6	(4)
Japanese Communist Party (JCP)	4	(5)
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto)	3	(2)
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto)	0	(0)
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon)	0	(0)
Other political parties	0	(1)
None	20	(25)
C/S+D/K	4	(4)

(Note) The total percentage does not become 100% in some cases due to rounding.

Polling methodology: The survey was taken April 27-29 by Nikkei Research Inc. over the telephone on a random digit dialing (RDD) basis. For the survey, samples were chosen from among men and women aged 20 and over across the nation. A total of 1,559 households with one or more voters were sampled, and answers were obtained from 865 persons (55.5% ).

(20) Poll on Abe cabinet, political parties (Mainichi)

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MAINICHI (Page 2) (Full)  
April 30, 2007

#### Questions & Answers

(T = total; P = previous; M = male; F = female)

Q: Do you support the Abe cabinet?

	T	P	M	F
Yes	43	(35)	42	44
No	33	(42)	40	28
Not interested	23	(22)	18	27

Q: (Only for those who answered "yes" to the above question) Why?

	T	P	M	F
Because the prime minister is from the Liberal Democratic Party	14	(20)	18	11
Because something can be expected of the prime minister's leadership	15	(10)	20	11
Because there's a young, fresh image about the prime minister	46	(51)	37	52
Because something can be expected of the prime minister's policy measures	21	(17)	19	22

Q: (Only for those who answered "no" to the above question) Why?

	T	P	M	F
Because the prime minister is from the Liberal Democratic Party	11	(6)	11	10
Because nothing can be expected of the prime minister's leadership	41	(53)	36	46
Because the prime minister is inexperienced, weak	13	(19)	11	15
Because I'm opposed to the prime minister's policies	32	(21)	36	27

Q: Which political party do you support?

	T	P	M	F
Liberal Democratic Party (LDP)	29	(27)	30	27
Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ or Minshuto)	16	(14)	21	13
New Komeito (NK)	5	(5)	2	7

Japanese Communist Party (JCP)	2	(3)	1	3
Social Democratic Party (SDP or Shaminto)	1	(2)	1	1
People's New Party (PNP or Kokumin Shinto)	1	(0)	1	0
New Party Nippon (NPN or Shinto Nippon)	--	(0)	--	--
Other political parties				

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1	(2)	2	1
None			
42	(47)	38	46

Q: Which political party between the LDP and the DPJ would you like to see win in this summer's election for the House of Councillors?

	T	P	M	F
LDP	38		38	39
DPJ	36		45	30
Other political parties	18		12	23

(Note) Figures shown in percentage, rounded off. "0" indicates that the figure was below 0.5%. "--" denotes that no respondents answered. "No answer" omitted. Figures in parentheses denote the results of the last survey conducted March 24-25.

Polling methodology: The survey was conducted April 28-29 over the telephone with the aim of calling a total of 1,000 voters across the nation on a computer-aided random digit sampling (RDS) basis. Answers were obtained from 1,085 persons.

(21) Majority of Japan War-Bereaved Association amenable to unenshrinement of Class-A war criminals from Yasukuni, perhaps affected by Emperor Showa's expression of "displeasure"

MAINICHI (Page 1) (Excerpts)  
May 6, 2007

Takenori Noguchi

The Japan War-Bereaved Association, whose chair is Makoto Koga, former secretary-general of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), will hold a first study session at the Kudan Kaikan Hall in Tokyo's Chiyoda Ward on May 8 to discuss the question of separate enshrinement of Class-A war criminals and other issues. A series of revelations of the Emperor Showa's remarks and historical documents, which have both showed that the Emperor Showa was displeased with the enshrinement of Class-A war criminals at Yasukuni Shrine, have fueled the association's tilt toward allowing separate enshrinement. At this point a majority of the study group favors separate enshrinement. If the study sessions continue, it is expected that the conclusion will be to countenance separate enshrinement. Yasukuni Shrine has rejected separate enshrinement, but once the association adopts a policy for separate enshrinement, the shrine will be forced to make a decision on the matter.

Last July, former Imperial Household Grand Steward Tomohiko Tomita's memos containing the Emperor Showa's remarks "Class A-war criminals were enshrined.... Since then I have never visited Yasukuni Shrine" were disclosed. Following it, as recently as this April, a diary written by former Chamberlain to the Emperor Ryogo Urabe became known. The diary backed up the Tomita memo, saying the reason why the Emperor stopped visiting the shrine was "because the Emperor was dissatisfied with the enshrinement of Class-A war criminals at Yasukuni." This revelation shook the association.

(22) Interview with Vice Defense Minister Moriya on North Korea: Japan needs to obtain US confirmation of "nuclear umbrella"

YOMIURI (Page 4) (Full)  
May 4, 2007

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Interviewer: Tatsuya Fukumoto

Over the past 20 years Japan has prepared a variety of laws to meet the changing security environment. The primary task facing Japan at present is to rebuild the country into a "crisis-resistant state" that can cope with such crises as massive terrorist attacks, big earthquakes, and destructive activities by armed guerillas. Next, Japan needs to establish a system enabling it to respond properly under the framework of the alliance with the United States in the event it is attacked by such means as ballistic missiles, suspicious ships, or guerillas. Specifically, Japan and the US should work out joint operation plans, and in addition, the two countries should carry out joint drills, check the effectiveness of joint operation plans, and revise them as the need arises. South Korea confirms through joint drills with the US that it can properly cope with a North Korean invasion. Japan also needs to do the same.

I think Japan needs to keep it in mind that when the US has to concentrate its forces in the Middle East, as it is having a hard time in Iraq, it is difficult for the US to conduct operations on two fronts (namely, contingencies involving Japan and the Korean Peninsula). Japan needs to make efforts to defend itself instead of criticizing the US. Any country that depends on others from the beginning is not viewed as a reliable country in the international community.

The most important thing for Japan, a country that has the three nonnuclear principles and that depends on the US for its nuclear deterrent, is to make relations with the US reliable and its nuclear deterrent feasible. To that end, Japan must elicit America's real intentions about its nuclear weapons at a time when Japan and the US carry out joint operation plans. If Japan can actually do so, Japan can see whether its dependence on America's nuclear deterrent can be kept in place as a policy.

Ahead of doing so, Japan has things to do, namely, building up defense capability and put it into operation. In other words, Japan must continue efforts to work out plans and carry out training. Debate in Japan is still theoretical. We must examine even the three nonnuclear principles in order to meet the needs of the times. For example, one such principle is not to introduce any nuclear weapons onto Japan's territory. One may say, "Introducing such weapons in our territory is not so bad." But before saying so, I think it is important for Japan to verify together with the US whether we can keep in place the policy of depending on America's nuclear deterrent.

(23) Peace and self-defense: 60th anniversary of Constitution;  
Protecting US warships clashes with Article 9; US asks for  
cooperation in dealing with DPRK missiles; Abe's effort to change  
constitutional interpretation gaining momentum

MAINICHI (Top play) (Full)  
May 5, 2007

A panel of experts to study the legal foundation for security -- a group reporting to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe regarding a review of the interpretation of the Constitution -- is scheduled to hold its inaugural meeting on May 18. The panel is tasked with studying four types of SDF activities that might infringe on Article 9 of the Constitution with the aim of producing its conclusion by September.

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Based on their conclusion, Prime Minister Abe is expected to make a political decision in the end. It has been 60 years since the Constitution of Japan took effect. This article examines developments concerning the peace and self-defense of Japan, which are now at a major turning point.

Is the Maritime Self-Defense Force allowed to protect US warships on the high seas?

The topic has repeatedly been discussed for over a half-century since the SDF's establishment, suspecting that such an act

constitutes an exercise of the right to collective self-defense, which is prohibited under the government's interpretation of the Constitution. Coming up with an answer to this classic question has been a pressing issue for the Japan-US alliance, which has been on alert against North Korean missiles.

North Korea launched seven ballistic missiles toward the Sea of Japan last July. Noticing signs of the North Korean missile launches through its spy satellite, the US military immediately deployed the USS Fitzgerald and Curtis Wilbur - Aegis equipped destroyers integrated into a missile defense (MD) system - of the Seventh Fleet to waters near Japan to monitor the North's moves. Carrying high-performance radar capable of acquiring over 200 targets and simultaneously attacking more than 10, they are powerful vessels.

They have a weak point, however. The radar's undivided attention in one direction for a possible missile launch several hundred kilometers away would leave the vessels largely defenseless against threats from other directions. Approaching spy ships are unnoticeable to the warships.

Under usual circumstances, US warships protect Aegis vessels. What took place last July was a contingency. "We are here to defend Japan. It is natural for MSDF vessels to defend US warships." This reaction from the US military took Japan by surprise. Defending US vessels might be an exercise of the right to collective defense.

"Until then, neither Japan nor the US envisaged such a case," a senior Defense Ministry official noted. Needs resulting from the Japan-US alliance clashed with the principle prescribed in Article 19.

Washington wondered why Japan, despite having the world's top equipment, was not able to defend US warships. Washington was highly alarmed by Japan's constitutional constraints that stood in the way of the bilateral plan to complete the MD system in five years. The US Defense Department conveyed the problem to Ambassador to Japan Thomas Schieffer. In a series of behind-the-scenes talks with Japan, Washington has urged Tokyo to allow the SDF to defend US Aegis vessels as part of the MD system in national contingencies. A set of reports has reached Prime Minister Abe as well.

Abe has put the matter at the top of the agenda for the expert council tasked with studying the interpretation of Article 9. The North Korean crisis has pushed the Abe administration toward a review of the government's conventional interpretation of the Constitution.

As far as military drills are concerned, the SDF and US forces in Japan have been highly integrated. For instance, the two countries conducted a joint exercise on the US aircraft carrier Abraham

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Lincoln when it navigated through the high seas off Kyushu and Okinawa on March 21-23, 2006. The MSDF Aegis destroyer Kirishima took the command of the entire drill. The scenario was for the Kirishima to protect the Abraham Lincoln by taking air defense command, issuing orders to the carrier-borne US fighters and for launching missiles. The US Navy and Japan's MSDF share information via the inter-computer data exchange system called Link 16, which has been technically trouble-free. The Japan-US military alliance has come this far against a backdrop of the ongoing constitutional debate.

(24) IPCC report specifies costs needed to cut CO2 emissions, giving momentum to debate on global-warming countermeasures

MAINICHI (Page 3) (Excerpts)  
May 5, 2007

The (three) working groups of the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released their fourth reports yesterday. Chairman Pachauri commented: "The reports propose specific countermeasures, and this will surely have a significant impact on future international negotiations." The reports announced yesterday offer a roadmap and specify the costs needed to cut

greenhouse gas emissions. The most noticeable point in the report is the clarification of projected costs needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, given such crises facing the world as sharply increasing natural disasters apparently caused by global warming.

70% cut in emissions possible by investing 1% of GDP

A study team of the National Institute for Environmental Studies and other organizations made a tentative calculation of costs needed for Japan to significantly reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and released the findings this February: If Japan continually invested the equivalent of about 1% of its gross domestic product (GDP) in developing technologies to reduce carbon dioxide (CO2), the nation would be able to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 70% by 2050. Setting nearly 10,000 yen at the maximum as the total cost needed to cut a ton of CO2 emissions, the report notes: "This figure is not especially higher than that of other countries."

"For climatic stabilization, the world is required to halve CO2 emissions from the current level by 2050. Industrialized countries need to cut such emissions by 60% to 80%." Based on this assumption, the study group conducted studies and looked into the possibility of whether Japan would be able to achieve a 70% reduction.

The panel envisioned various scenarios about Japanese society in 2050, for instance, a society in which priority is given to economic and technological development (GDP growth per capita at 2% ; population at 95 million) or a society with priority given to regional economic growth and natural conservation (GDP growth per capita at 1% ; population at 100 million). The panel then considered what technologies should apply in each case.

As a result of case studies, the panel concluded that it would be possible to meet the goal of a 70% cut if Japan invests mainly in developing large-scale technologies to generate nuclear power and to dump or store CO2 in the ground in an economic-development-oriented society and chiefly in developing technologies to generate renewable energy, such as biomass energy, in a regional development-oriented society.

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The panel estimates the total sum of necessary investment funds in 2050 at 6.7 to 9.8 trillion yen annually, or about 1% of GDP. When possible profits taken into consideration, such as cuts in cost due to reduced oil demand, the actual total amount is calculated to be 0.7 to 1.8 trillion yen.

Mizuho Information Research Institute senior manager Hibino, a study team member, said: "Some complain that it is overly expensive in Japan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but it has been found that it would be possible to reduce emissions at almost the same cost cited in the IPCC report. It is imperative for Japan to take countermeasures from a long-term point of view."

(25) Japan, ASEAN reach agreement in principle to sign EPA: 90% of tariffs to be abolished

ASAHI (Page 1) (Excerpts)  
May 5, 2007

Japan and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on May 4 held an economic ministerial meeting in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei, and agreed in principle to liberalize trade in goods, a central part of the economic partnership agreement (EPA), regarding which talks are now underway. Once such an agreement is reached, Japan will abolish 92% of tariffs on trade items in terms of import value, and ASEAN will scrap 90% of tariffs in the same terms. Both parties will decide on items subject to liberalization and sign an EPA, which will also incorporate liberalization in investment and services, in August with the aim of enacting it next year.

This will be Japan's first EPA with a regional association. The pact is expected to move forward economic integration with ASEAN. Japan's trade with ASEAN accounted for about 13% in 2006 in terms of value. Tariffs will be removed over a period of 10 years once the pact is

enacted. Coordination is underway with the possibility of allowing Vietnam, Cambodia, Burma and Laos - the least developed ASEAN members - to extend the deadline up to five years.

Japan will designate 1% of its import amount as an exceptional area and impose tariff caps on the remaining 7%. ASEAN is increasing its call for further concessions. Chances are, therefore, the percentage of items subject to tariff abolition may be increased from 92%.

If trade with ASEAN is liberalized, the current division of labor, in which ASEAN members manufacture final products using basic parts developed and produced in Japan and distribute them in the region, will become tariff-free, enhancing the cost competitiveness of Japanese manufacturers of such products as electronics and automobiles. ASEAN hopes to see Japan expand investment in the region.

(26) Wavering US policy-From the scene of security (Part 3): Across the Pacific; Japan as outpost for US military to expand its engagement in Asia

KANAGAWA SHIMBUN (Page 4) (Full)  
March 29, 2007

Yuki Takahashi, Masao Ishio

In the State of Washington is a US Navy base. This US naval base is  
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called Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, or NAS Whidbey Island for short. In late February, NAS Whidbey Island briefed its neighbors on a plan to replace aircraft based there.

NAS Whidbey Island keeps an eye on the Pacific Ocean, with P-3C antisubmarine patrol planes currently stationed there. The US Navy is planning to replace them with the P-8A, a jet plane equipped with state-of-the-art surveillance functions. "The noise situation is expected to change," says a US Navy officer of the base. "So," this officer added, "we've got to explain the plan in detail to local communities." P-8As may be deployed in rotation to Misawa or Kadena.

Along with the planned realignment of US Forces Japan (USFJ), the US military will now step up its functions on the Pacific front, starting this year. The US Army's 1st Corps, also known as I Corps, is currently headquartered at a base in Fort Lewis in Washington. The I Corps will also move its headquarters. Its planned command move to Camp Zama, a US Army base in Kanagawa Prefecture, is expected to begin within the year.

"They also want to deepen their understanding of Asian societies and cultures," says one US expert. Along with USFJ realignment, US Forces Korea (USFK), which is now realigning its footprint in South Korea, is also presumed to come under the Zama command of I Corps after its right to command during emergencies is returned to the South Korean forces.

"Let us create friendship across the Pacific," I Corps Commander Dubick stressed. Commander Dubick was addressing Japanese and American troops participating in an annual session of Japan-US joint bilateral training exercises held in February this year at a Ground Self-Defense Force Middle Army range in Hyogo Prefecture with I Corps troops also participating. In the joint drills this time, the GSDF and the US Army also carried out civil-military coordination training for the first time in anticipation of public protection during emergencies.

In recent years, the US military has been deepening its civil engagement in Asia. In February, the USS Blue Ridge, the flagship of the US Navy's 7th Fleet based at Yokosuka, visited the Philippines, where its crew was engaged in school repairs. "In the Asia-Pacific region, there are a number of countries that have islands or long coastlines. In the region, the Navy is best qualified to promote peace through friendship." So saying, an official of the US Pacific Fleet at its headquarters in Hawaii boasted of the US Navy's role.



Shackled by difficult problems in the Middle East, the United States is reportedly prone to maintain its Asia strategy as is. However, Pacific stability is becoming a matter of life or death for the United States in its expanded trade with Asia. Above all, the question of how to cope with China's military emergence in the region is the biggest challenge to cope with for the present. The United States wants to maintain its readiness and influence in the Asia-Pacific region. The US military's logistical outposts in Kanagawa Prefecture—such as Yokosuka, Zama, and Sagami Depot—will inevitably weigh more than ever with the United States.

However, some people in the United States are warning Japan and the United States against pushing ahead with only their bilateral alliance. In February, former US Deputy Secretary of State Armitage and his policy study group released a report on the Japan-US

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alliance. That report suggested the necessity of trilateral cooperation between Japan, the United States, and China, while urging China to become a "responsible stakeholder."

"The alliance between Japan and the United States is important," says Katy Oh, chief researcher at the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA), a US think tank. "But," she adds, "if they push for the alliance too dramatically, neighbors could be put on edge." She also suggested the need for Japan and the United States to give careful explanations in the process of pushing for their alliance. In the way ahead, Japan and the United States are going to rebuild their alliance, with its foothold at US military bases in Kanagawa Prefecture. The two countries, however, will likely be called to heed a balance between their alliance in its future image and Asian neighbors.

(Corrected copy) Yohei Kono should admit that the political decision on "comfort women" was a mistake

SANKEI (Page 5) (Full)  
May 2, 2007

By Nobuaki Hanaoka, guest editorial board member

Shinzo Abe's first visit to the United States as prime minister was taken as a trip for him to make an "apology" for the comfort women issue. We wonder why the person who made the prime minister play such a humiliating role refuses to talk about his own political responsibility. That person is House of Representatives Speaker Yohei Kono.

It is widely known that the Kono Statement was issued by a political decision based on the request by South Korean authorities, who insisted that the bilateral dispute over history would be resolved if Japan admitted there was "coercion," without confirming whether the government had actually coerced foreign women (to become comfort women).

The comfort-women resolution submitted to the US House of Representatives by Congressman Mike Honda was drafted based on the Kono Statement. Should the Congress adopt the resolution, the Japan-US relations will be immeasurably damaged, even though the resolution is nonbinding. We were amazed when Mike Honda described the comfort women the "largest example of human trafficking in the 20th century." Since Honda is now known throughout the world, he will without a doubt be reelected. We see this as an odious saga of a politician who has placed priority on holding on to his seat in the Congress no matter how much he slanders another country.

Because of Prime Minister Abe's visit, the situation has changed in the United States. In order to prevent the resolution from being adopted, however, Kono should admit that the political decision made at that time was a mistake (but he doesn't necessarily have to announce it). His actions would be complete if he stepped down from the Lower House speaker's post and gave up his Diet seat. If so, the US government's reaction would be completely changed. Kono would then be able to leave his mark on history as a former LDP president who saved the nation from a crisis.

Major European and US news media (and Japanese correspondents) show a woeful lack of study. The Chinese and South Korean media think that hurling abuse purposely is reporting "news." That's nonsense.

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Chinese and South Korean media do not issue newspapers, but they publish "organ papers." Therefore, what we need to do is basically ignore them.

I had no way to know or understand how terrible the media in democratic European countries and the United States are. If you add something about "Japan bashing," it sells. The western media lack the capability to consider how "war and sex" were handled in their own countries.

It is only natural to give serious consideration to the many women who were forced into tragic situations during the war. However, many correspondents do now know even the basic facts: There existed legalized prostitution run by agents; soldiers paid money to the comfort women; and since there was a hygienic safety problem, the military for that reason oversaw the wartime brothels. This is the basis for the worldwide scale "crisis in the media."

I have been a newspaper reporter for about some 30 years. I was taught that writing articles based on the facts is a very basic rule of news reporting. "Hunting down comfort women," "sexual slaves" and the like were fictional productions. If the European and US media come to realize that fact, they should issue "corrections." This is also a basic principle for the media.

DONOVAN